

Dear Enfield Council

Response to the Draft Local Plan Reg 18 Consultation 2021

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this important consultation.

I strongly object to the wholesale destruction of Enfield's unique heritage, which would result from the realisation of the proposals on which the draft local plan is based. It can only have been written by those who do not live within the borough or have no knowledge of its character and history.

My first objection is to pages 156-60, Figure 7.3, Figure 7.4 and Policy DE6, and SA2 Palace Gardens Shopping centre page 321, where it encourages tall buildings, including in sensitive locations such as the town centre conservation area. Not only are buildings at the proposed 'acceptable height of 13 storeys' wholly inappropriate in a low density conservation area,, but the type of accommodation they offer is unhealthy and not in line with Enfield's greatest need for affordable family homes. It is surprising that the height thought acceptable is nearly twice that recommended in the London Plan - 7 storeys. Not so long ago, LBE acknowledged that the existing high rise towers in the town centre were intrusive and inappropriate. This sudden change of mind is astonishing especially when even Mr Jenrick is appealing for gentle density.

I also object to the following Policies: SP PL10, pages 80-87, and Figure 3.11; Policy SP PL9, pages 77-80 and Concept Plan Figure 3.10; Policy SA45: Land Between Camlet Way and Crescent Way, Hadley Wood, page 364; Policy SA54, page 374; Policy SA52 page 372; and Policy SA62 page 383 and SP CL4 pages 277-279 – all of which propose the de-designation of Green Belt for housing and other purposes.

Most of these sites are part of historic Enfield Chase, which played an important role in the development of Enfield. The remaining parts of the Chase are unique in the southeast and a rare and valuable landscape asset. The loss of these sites would cause permanent harm not only to the Green Belt, but also to the very character of the borough. Vicarage Farm is crossed by the Merryhills Way footpath, much used by Enfield residents and others for exercise and relaxation and the physical and mental health attributes of the footpath would be destroyed by development. The farmland could be put back into productive use growing local food for local people. Crews Hill is equally important to the borough and should not be destroyed. Its garden centres and other businesses provide employment and a resource for people from Enfield and beyond. Instead of losing Crews Hill for housing, its horticultural activities should be encouraged and enhanced so that it can once again be a hub for food and plant production as well as a magnet for local tourism.

While I support housing development and LBE's ambition to meet housing needs, I strongly object to the proposal to release Green Belt for housing or other purposes. I believe that there are alternatives available to meet housing targets and that the Green Belt is a precious resource that should be protected and preserved for future generations. It is too valuable to lose for all the many environmental, ecological, economic, public health and other reasons that have been identified, especially during the recent pandemic. The Council has a duty of care for the Green Belt, in accordance with the London Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF], and any intentions to release parts of it should be taken out of the local plan.

The comments provided here are my own views, and unless they are reflected in the resulting Local Plan, I will change from being a lifelong labour supporter to a party that respects history, the environment and the characteristics which up to now have made Enfield special!